

Message Text

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ACTION PM-04

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FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 606

INFO USCINCSO CZ

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN SALVADOR 1333

EO 11652 GDS

TAGS: MASS ES

SUBJ: CHANGES IN FOREIGN MILITARY TRAINING PROGRAM

REF STATE 51768

1. THE FOLLOWING ARE THE CT'S ANSWERS TO PARAGRAPH 5 QUERIES OF THE REFERENCE MESSAGE:

A. THE HOST GOVERNMENT IS ALREADY AWARE OF THE SUBSTANTIAL INCREASES IN COST. IT ALSO RECOGNIZES THAT IT CAN DO NOTHING ABOUT IT. THERE WILL BE LITTLE OR NO EFFECT ON BILATERAL RELATIONS AS A RESULT OF THIS DEVELOPMENT.

B. THE TYPE OF TRAINING OF GREATEST GOES INTEREST IS PILOT TRAINING. THE HOST COUNTRY IS NOT PAYING FOR THIS TRAINING NOW. THEY COULD PAY FOR IT IN THE FUTURE WITHOUT A GREAT BURDEN ON THEIR ECONOMY. THE HOST COUNTRY CONTINUES TO BUY THIRD COUNTRY AIRCRAFT, WHILE REQUESTING US PILOT TRAINING.

C. THE ONLY CURSE OF SPECIFIC BENEFIT TO US NATIONAL INTEREST IS THE SALVADORAN MILITARY ACADEMY'S 16-20 WEEKS TRAINING IN PANAMA (WHICH IN THE FUTURE EL SALVADOR WISHES TO BE TAUGHT IN ENGLISH). SINCE 95 PERCENT OF THE SALVADORAN OFFICER COPRS GOES TO THE ACADEMY THIS COURSE EXPOSES THE VAST MAJORITY

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OF THIS IMPORTANT SECTOR TO US THINKING AT AN EARLY STAGE IN

THEIR CAREER. OTHER GRANT ASSISTANCE PROVIDED TO EL SALVADOR HAS BEEN PERCEIVED IN THE CONTEXT OF "SUPPORTING FRIENDLY RELATIONS." PRESENTLY THESE COURSES ARE BEING PROVIDED UNDER GRANT ASSISTANCE. IF THE COSTS DOUBLE, THE GRANT PROGRAM WILL CONTINUE BUT WITH LESS COURSES OFFERED.

D. THE HOST COUNTRY WOULD PROBABLY ABANDON MOST OF THE NON-TECHNICAL COURSES NOW OFFERED. IT WOULD PROBABLY WISH TO CONTINUE WITH SELECTIVE TECHNICAL COURSES, AND POSSIBLY ADVANCE ARMY COURSES.

E. BECAUSE OF SEVERAL FACTORS, INCLUDING COST OF TRAINING, THE HOST COUNTRY WILL NOT LOOK ELSEWHERE FOR EQUIVALENT TRAINING. ONLY IF IT MADE MAJOR PURCHASES OF EQUIPMENT FROM THIRD COUNTRIES WOULD THERE BE A POSSIBILITY THAT TECHNICIANS MIGHT ACCOMPANY THAT EQUIPMENT, TO ASSIST IN ITS INTRODUCTION. THE IMPACT ON MILITARY COMPETENCE WOULD BE MINIMAL AT FIRST BUT IF THE HOST COUNTRY DID NOT CONTINUE FMS TRAINING AT THE HIGHER COSTS POSITED REFTEL, ITS MILITARY COMPETENCE WOULD SLOWLY DIMINISH.

F. IF GRANT AID IS ELIMINATED A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF INFLUENCE WOULD BE LOST. THIS WOULD BE TRUE ONLY IF EL SALVADOR CHOSE NOT TO PAY FOR FUTURE FMS TRAINING. ALL INDICATIONS ARE THAT EL SALVADOR WISHES TO CONTINUE ITS PRESENT RELATIONS WITH THE US MILITARY. THE GOES, PROBABLY BECAUSE OF PAST US TRAINING, PREFERS US EQUIPMENT. HOWEVER, AFTER THE SALVADOR-HONDURAS WAR, US POLITICAL DECISIONS FORCED GOES TO FIND OTHER SUPPLIERS. ALTHOUGH THESE POLITICAL DECISIONS WERE MODIFIED IN 1973, PRICE AND/OR AVAILABILITY AT TIMES HAMPER PROCUREMENT OF US EQUIPMENT. THE GOES MUST LEARN TO PLAN AND PROGRAM THE TRAINING REQUIRED FOR THE PURCHASE OF NEW EQUIPMENT. THE US MIGHT ASSIST WITH GRANT TRAINING IN THOSE INSTANCES WHERE THE GOES REPLACED AGING EQUIPMENT WITH US ITEMS.

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